

THE ASSOCIATE PLAYERS

Interesting Presentation of Irish Dramas at Margaret Eaton School

The Associate Players of the Margaret Eaton School of Literature and Expression appeared last evening in the Greek Theatre in three playlets: "Hyacinth Halvey," and "The Rising of the Moon," by Lady Gregory, and "Kathleen Ni Houlihan," a play in one act by William Butler Yeats. These presentations of Irish dramas which the Associate Players have made so interesting are of particular value as a means of becoming acquainted with the literary revival in Ireland to-day through such noted leaders as W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory. They afford more than a theatrical acquaintance with a much misunderstood national type for the pens of the Willie Watson.

A WEST VIRGINIA GIRL attending college rooted for the wrong football team the other day. That night her sister-students painted her red. There is nothing like a ladies' college to give a girl polish.

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It seems to me that but scant notice was given in the daily press of the rendering of Yeats' beautiful little tragic plays, "The Land of Heart's Desire" and "Kathleen Ni Houlihan," by Mrs. Scott Raff and her goodly company of the Margaret Eaton School of Expression. You would have to be "rue" Irish and well-versed in the tragic history of Ireland to understand much less appreciate the exquisite work of Yeats. Especially is "Kathleen Ni Houlihan" touching in its spirituality and tenderness. What alien audience could understand the Poor Old Woman's plaint of her many lovers who had died for love of her? Many and many's the man that has laid down his life for old Erin. And the four beautiful green fields that were taken from her by the stranger—the four provinces of Ireland. You remember the very end? The French are landing at Killala—then Bridget to Patrick, "Did you see an old woman going down the path?" "I did not, but I saw a young girl and she had the walk of a queen." But to know W. Butler Yeats properly you have to study and dream over his "Celtic Twilight."

74.25.31.1/2

RY 9, 1921.

WOMEN ARE UNAWARE OF OWN GREAT POWER

'Should Decide for Themselves,'
Lecturer Tells Q. O. R.
Chapter I.O.D.E.

"No matter what a woman's opportunities have been, she has truth within her to guide her own life and destiny. The destiny of woman is leadership in ideals, spiritual leadership of men," was the stirring message delivered to-day to the members of the Queen's Own Rifles Chapter, I.O.D.E., at the annual meeting by Mrs. George G. Nasmith in a lecture on "What Do Women Know of Women's Power?" the result of years of thought, study and observation in regard to the subject. Expressing the conviction that women have no conception of their own power or its conservation and development, the lecturer declared that the place of women is not in competition with men, and that they cannot demand anything in the race of life from men for the reason that they have their own field of spiritual leadership, as has been demonstrated all through history. Because of their high destiny, women should never preach the doctrine of hate.

Emphasis was laid upon the importance of three-fold development for women, physical as the foundation for highest moral and spiritual attainment.

"If women understood their bodies as they should, and how to rest them," she said, "if they lived in accordance with the law of the body, of life and of God, they would know not merely enough health and strength to get through the day's duties, but life, joyous and abundant. When there is no disturbance of the physical equilibrium, then there is poise, which tends to the highest class of morality."

"Women do not rely upon themselves and their own judgment sufficiently, but are too much inclined to go outside of themselves for direction," another view on which Mrs. Nasmith laid stress. "Since they have truth within themselves to discriminate between the false and the true, they should exercise their own initiative fearlessly."

Every woman, she continued, should have some literary interest outside her own domestic or other work to keep her brain alive and alert. The beauty side of life she regarded as essential to spiritual development, even if it involved "selling one of two loaves to buy hyacinths to feed the soul."

Mrs. George C. Royce, regent of the Queen's Own Rifles Chapter, who has been ill all winter, and is leaving this week with her husband, Lieut.-Col. Royce, for the south, received a warm welcome at the meeting and took the chair.

No changes were made in the personnel of the executive, the only "annual meeting" feature being the presentation of reports which told of \$500 given to the war memorial fund, knitting and sewing for children between two and four years old in the prevention of war, donations of warm clothing to the Gravenhurst Sanatorium following the fire, responses to various appeals, service to the men of the Queen's Own and their families, and decoration of graves of members of the regiment.

Lady Pellatt, the honorary regent, sent the flowers for the decoration of the officers mess quarters of the Q.O.R., in the Armouries, where the meeting took place, and for the attractive tea table.

rule of the evening.

Margaret Eaton School

The work of Mrs. Scott Raff as principal of the Margaret Eaton School of Literature and Expression, was given a pleasing exposition on Saturday evening, before an audience of interested friends of the institution. Mrs. Scott Raff has long directed the destinies of the school which has differed in her style of instruction from most tutors of expression. The number of pupils has been large and the recitals of pupils or directress have attracted invariably a good attendance. Mrs. Raff's programme comprised "The Revolt of Mother" (Wilkins); "A Woman's Rose" (Thanet); two numbers from Kipling; W. B. Yeats' lyric, "The Shadowy Waters," and in the second part of the programme the Greek drama, "Iphigenia," in which the co-operation of the school players was required. The Toronto String Quartette assisted.

MRS. SCOTT-RAFF'S RECITAL

World: Jan 3 '10
Her Interruptions of Current Literature Show Womanly Tenderness.

Mrs. Scott-Raff had her annual recital at the Margaret Eaton School of Literature and Expression last night, and gathered the usual fashionable and highly critical and appreciative audience in the beautiful hall of the school. Dim lights, reduced almost to darkness, except on the stage, which was chastely decorated, threw out the figure of the reader in soft relief, and the accessories were all of the most artistic character. The musical interludes by Miss Spencer, who played a transcript of Wagner's "Fire Music," and a movement from the Moonlight Sonata, and by Robert Stuart Pigott, were exquisite.

Mrs. Scott-Raff's program was ingeniously novel. The first section was a series of "Life Studies" from current literature. There is a deep vein of womanly tenderness in Mrs. Scott-Raff's interpretations, and some of these studies particularly emphasized this factor of her work. "Out of the Dark," Montague's tragic incident of the borderland, presented a vivid picture. In the second section, "Lyrics," such classics as Shelley's "Skylark," Browning's "Evelyn Hope," Tennyson's "Sisters," and Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," were rendered with that exalted aspiration which distinguishes Mrs. Scott-Raff's elucidations. Yeats' morality play, "The Hour Glass," closed the program, and was given with the subdued simplicity associated with the traditions of the new Irish school. Applause was frequent, but was deprecated by the reader, who endeavored to preserve the atmosphere of the poems presented.

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The presentation was marked by sincerity and good dramatic technique. The company consisted of the following: Mrs. Scott Raff, Miss Topley Thomas, Miss Macartney, Robert Stuart Piggott, Milton Lee, E. E. Griffith, V. C. Keachie, C. P. Spafford, and W. T. McBroom.

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MRS. SCOTT RAFF GIVES RECITAL

Excellent Interpretation of
Interesting Readings.

Mrs. Scott Raff gave her annual recital on Saturday evening in the beautiful hall of the Margaret Eaton School. The talent of Mrs. Scott Raff is interpretative rather than dramatic, and she excels purely as a reader in bringing out the finer shades of meaning in her selections. It is in such poems as Kipling's "The Builders" where different characters are not in evidence, but where the ideas of the writer are most important, that Mrs. Scott Raff shows at her best. She brings out the full force of the thought of the poet, and her interpretation leaves little to be desired. She also made an excellent impression with Octave Thanet's "A Woman's Rose." One of the most interesting features of the programme was W. B. Yeats' "The Shadowy Waters." The wonderful mystical quality of this little drama makes it one which can be best appreciated in the study where the reader has more time to grasp the evasive fancies. In fact even if an attempt were made to stage it, only those who had read it could catch its full significance. Many of Yeats' poems seem made for a musical setting, but "The Shadowy Waters" more than any other, could be best interpreted by the genius of a composer. In her task of giving it as a reading, Mrs. Scott Raff showed ambition and scholarly care. Her other selections were Marv E. Wilkins' "The Revolt of Mother," probably one of the finest short stories in the literature of the United States; "His Majesty the King," Kipling; "Wynken, Blynken and Nod," Field; "The Merman," Arnold; and the Greek drama, "Tphigenera," in which she was assisted by Miss Dora Mavor, Mr. Basil Morgan and the school players.

The Toronto String Quartette gave several numbers, and this excellent little organization again demonstrated that as interpreters of chamber music the artists have never been surpassed in Toronto. The purity of their tone grows almost more striking at each appearance. They gave a fine rendering of Svensden's "Andantino," and in Schumann's "Abendlied," the viola solo was played with great taste by Mr. F. C. Smith. Their other numbers were Raff's "Erklarung" and "Die Muhl."

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MRS. SCOTT RAFF'S RECITAL.

Mrs. Scott Raff's interpretative recital in the Margaret Eaton School of Expression last Saturday evening attracted a large and cultured audience, who gave the artist an enthusiastic reception. Mrs. Scott Raff is well known for her painstaking and careful work as head of the Eaton institution, and her program on this occasion only served to illustrate more vividly the inimitable powers of one who aims at elocutionary perfection. Mrs. Raff's program was well arranged, and on the whole attractive. Her initial series of stories comprised "The Revolt of Mother" (Wilkins); "A Woman's Rose" (Thanet), and two striking numbers from Kipling's pen. In W. B. Yeats' dramatic lyric, "The Shadowy Waters," Mrs. Raff's ability as an interpreter was demonstrated in no uncertain manner, the incidental music suggestive of Forgael's magic harp being realistic in its appeal. The Toronto String Quartette added to the excellence of the program with a delicate and beautiful rendering of an arrangement of Schumann's "Abendlied," in which the viola solo was played by Mr. Frank Smith with artistic understanding and velvety quality of tone. They also produced some lovely ensemble effects in Svensden's fascinating andantino, a fact the audience did not fail to appreciate warmly. The feature of the second part of the program was Mrs. Raff's presentation of the Greek drama "Iphigenia," assisted by the school players and Miss Dora Mavor and Mr. Basil Morgan. *Globe Dec 5 1910*

TORONTO SATURDAY NIGHT

DECEMBER 10, 1910.

Mrs. Scott Raff's recital on Saturday was a thing of artistic excellence and earnest effort. The reader has great charm of person and dignity of soul, and her readings are both impressive and beautiful, uplifted beyond the vulgar atmosphere of stagecraft and sensation into the ideal. The dainty and refined music of the Toronto String Quartette was in absolute accord with the programme, and was greatly enjoyed by the enthusiastic audience.

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Dec. 11th 1911

Toronto World

Margaret Eaton Hall Recital

Mrs. Scott-Raff is happy in a large and appreciative constituency which last night crowded Margaret Eaton Hall to the limit on the occasion of her recital on Saturday evening. Mrs. Scott-Raff's method is one that relies for its success on the appeal to the intellect rather than to the senses. At the same time there is a pleasant and attractive environment provided in the stage decoration, the subdued lighting, and accessories of music which suggest refinement and the atmosphere of the soul rather than the body. Mrs. Scott-Raff's elocution is simple and at times even colloquial. The whole object apparently is to concentrate attention upon the composition rather than the reader. Her low sweet voice, with its minor cadence, while at times pitched in prolonged monotone, is clear and carries well, and the stillness of her auditors indicated the close attention with which she held them. Naturally her method is better adapted to didactic verse than to dramatic forms. But where tense and profound but restrained feeling is to be conveyed Mrs. Scott-Raff's method is obviously impressive. As it depends upon the repression rather than the expression of emotion, and the indication by indirection rather than by direct revelation of the thought or action of the poems she reads, it is clear that Mrs. Scott-Raff's performance is not to be judged by ordinary dramatic standards. In selections from Browning, Tennyson and Kipling such a poem as "The Higher Pantheism" yields most to this style of treatment, and Mrs. Scott-Raff was accordingly at her very best in this, and Kipling's "The Builders" followed it closely. In "Come Into the Garden, Maud," the most passionate cry perhaps that Tennyson voiced, Mrs. Scott-Raff's subjective manner throws one back somewhat cold-bloodedly upon the lyrical perfection in workmanship of the poet, and in the "Ballad of East and West" there could be no greater contrast than with the reading in the same hall by Mr. Hadley some time ago of the same ballad. But the point is not whether Mrs. Scott-Raff does not do something else, but whether she accomplishes what she sets out to do. That there is the germ and perhaps more than the germ of a new school of interpretation in her method may readily be admitted. The applause which greeted her, and the intense interest taken in her work is sufficient guarantee of her success.

In her reading from Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird" nothing could have been better than the children's dialog. It was a triumph of artless, natural simplicity. Six scenes of the play were read, sufficient to convey all the Belgian mystic's conception of pre-existence, and the other world into which we pass in sleep when one lamp is extinguished and another lighted. The charming comedy of the scenes aroused considerable laughter, altho the restraint of Mrs. Scott-Raff's intention seeks rather for smiles. The child who had to bring down his parcel of scarlatina, whooping-cough and measles was too much for even the gravest.

A perfectly enchanting effect was obtained at the close of this scene, when the lights were lowered, where "Light" announces, "It is the song of the mothers coming out to meet them," and Jan Hambourg played some music on the violin specially composed by him for the scene, and accompanied on the piano. Nothing more beautiful or more instinct with Maeterlinck's poetry could be desired.

Mr. Hambourg and Richard Tattersall also gave a sonata for violin and piano by Cesar Franck. The perfect exhibition of sustained tone which Mr. Hambourg's bowing assures was exquisitely evident in the phrases of simple melody, dependent so solely on subtle color as they did in the allegretto and recitations. Mr. Hambourg declined an encore.



74.25.34

Stage and

AMATEUR GROUPS EVOLVE LOCAL SCHOOL OF ACTORS

Toronto Now School of Stagecraft Owes Histrionic Development
to Several Leaders Working Along Different Line

—Mrs. Nasmith Contributed Much

FORSYTHE, MITCHELL AND OTHERS HELPED

Last week, somebody remarked to somebody at a club on the itinerary next season of the Hart House String Quartet and said: "Oh, well, Hart House actors will soon be on the road"—meaning a joke. But it was at once replied seriously: "That's exactly what it is hoped the Hart House players will do."

The new Hart House director's identity has been known for some time, but no announcement of him can be made for a couple of weeks. Meanwhile Bertram Forsyth, who for the past three years has done so much to create Hart House histrionic technique, becomes director of the Margaret Eaton School. The new temporal theatre of this school will be what was once Association Hall, rebuilt as to stage facilities and capable of a large audience about half of whom used to be able to see the stage.

Margaret Eaton School on Bay street, will shortly be abandoned; it was doomed to be sold when the new car lines cut off the vestibule and half the gallery; besides, it was already too small, and had carried out much of the dream of its true founder, Mrs. Scott Nasmith, who got the model for the building in Greece, and persuaded Timothy Eaton to reproduce it here.

Career of Mrs. Nasmith

The retirement of Mrs. Nasmith as active director of the school recalls a career—not yet complete—of intense idealism in the art of expression successfully carried out. Mrs. Nasmith has a wonderful Irish enthusiasm. Her father was a circuit Methodist preacher, who used to hold revivals; and a Methodist revival used to be a good school of drama.

The first reading I ever heard Mrs. Nasmith give was about twenty-two years ago at the old College of Music, where she was then principal of the expression department. She read scenes from Shakespeare. The last time I heard her she did a play by St. John Ervine, the Irish dramatist, who lectured through here three or four years ago. Her older love of Shakespeare seemed to be re-absorbed into a more practical and intense love of the modern British group of play writers—including the best known of the Irish group.

Idealism To Pioneer Art

It takes the idealism of some women to have faith in forms of art for the purpose of pioneering them into practice. Mrs. Nasmith has always been an idealist. The Margaret Eaton School was a concrete expression of this. The passing of the directorship into other hands brings out in sharper relief the courageous idealism of the woman who made such a school possible. From that germ, the first to take organized life here in the form of a school, came the later development of the poetic and aesthetic side in music, dancing and physical culture.

Some years ago the extra activities of this school outgrew the building on what was then North street. The old Y.M.C.A. was taken for a club to include dancing and "gym" instruction, with the old con-

things that could be stretched and painted and nailed up, there could arise some play.

Mitchell worked in a poetic atmosphere and his play productions were always poetic and sometimes spectacular. Then he went to Hart House and evolved a technical equipment which made the spectacular element so much easier; where lighting and "deus ex machina" and apron stage and painters' art and music were always available; and from that point his play production became altogether different. He put Hart House on the theatrical map and left a record of certain very distinctive and clever productions in which up to the time he left there had been small opportunity to develop the technique of professional acting.

The Dickens Fellowship were the earliest group to develop stage craft centering around stage versions of Dickens' novels. On the purely story side those players under the direction first of the late F. M. Bell-Smith and Mr. Williamson, later of Mr. A. J. Rostance, have carried character acting and costuming to a high degree of proficiency. The realism of the people, sometimes twenty or more distinct varieties, in some of those plays has been an object lesson in one phase of stage craft to other groups whose repertoires are broader.

Forsyth Started School of Drama

But it was a professional theatre that Hart House for amateurs was fated to become, and which Bertram Forsyth has done more than anybody else to perfect in technique in spite of many technical obstacles in the construction of an underground theatre. How well he has done it thousands know. Hart House, quite apart from any original scheme of its founders and syndics, has become a school for actors.

What Forsyth will do in a less equipped theatre is yet to be seen. But he has a genius for adapting means to an end; a sheer knowledge of stagecraft; a sense of showmanship and a marvelous facility in a quiet way for producing big results without lavish material. He has produced with equal success Greek tragedies, Gluck's Orfeo, Shakespeare plays, pantomime, pastorals, mysteries, smart modern plays by such writers as Milne, Dunsany and Sutton Vane, plays involving dance and music, burlettas and farces and straight comedies. The technique of such production, following that of other people whose earlier efforts made it possible, has come to mark this city—with its regular summer school of drama now in session—as a school for actors.

Forsyth has a great capacity for detail, a practical knowledge of everything in stage craft from the prompter's box to the carpenter shop, from the paint room to the wardrobe. He has a keen sympathy for pictorial design, for mass and color in stage compositions, for lighting effects that can be either bizarre or a mere glimmer to suggest the outlines and background of the picture. He understands the art of making the set suit the play and of simple devices, often symbolic, in stead of realism in detail. As much as anything he has the lyric sense which not only expresses itself in the use he often makes of incidental music, but most commonly in the lyric quality of spoken words, which is one of the plastic arts of the stage.

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Mitchell Featured Little Theatre

In this building Mr. Forsyth from Hart House will take a fresh start in his own personal development of amateur drama. He is already well known as the second director of Hart House theatre, Mr. Roy Mitchell having been the first. Mr. Mitchell pioneered the little theatre movement here outside of the school on Bay street. Twenty years ago he became interested in the theatre, just how nobody seems to know much. About fifteen years ago, after newspapering unconventionally in a number of American cities following a term on the old Toronto World, he brought to a focus his love of the unusual. Mitchell was then, as now, an ardent theosophist, and from that angle rather than from the theatre itself he evolved his passion for little plays.

Mitchell's Plays

The first plays by Mitchell here were such as nobody else was putting on stage; among the best remembered of which were Yeats' "Shadowy Waters," Noah's Ark miracle play, Tagore's "Postoffice" and "Chitra," "Shadow of the Glen," Maeterlinck's "Interior," Lady Gregory's "Rising of the Moon," Synge's "Riders to the Sea," some old Italian mummers' plays, and one or two Japanese no-plays. From this poetic and cosmopolitan pack of plays Mitchell evolved stagecraft under the most primitive conditions. He could contrive a set for a good play out of as much lumber as he could carry up the back alley stairs in three trips, a pound of nails, a few yards of brown paper and a little paint, and a whole lot of amazing practical ingenuity. By means of such primitive contrivances mostly made by his own shirt-sleeves labor, Mitchell could turn the end of a big room into a stage, and with his players trailing through the audience converted the room into a theatre. I saw these plays produced from most of their incorrigible and plastic elements and know what a genius for extemporization went into them; how devilishly hard Mitchell labored under such ingenious conditions and in most cases what splendid results he achieved.

Little Theatre for a Location

He made it evident that the little theatre anywhere was not a set school or a cult with a permanent location and a guarantee fund; but where half a dozen amateurs—not always-mattering who—were gathered together with enough lumber and

writers as Milne, Dunsany and Sutton Vane, plays involving dance and music, burlettas and farces and straight comedies. The technique of such production, following that of other people whose earlier efforts made it possible, has come to mark this city—with its regular summer

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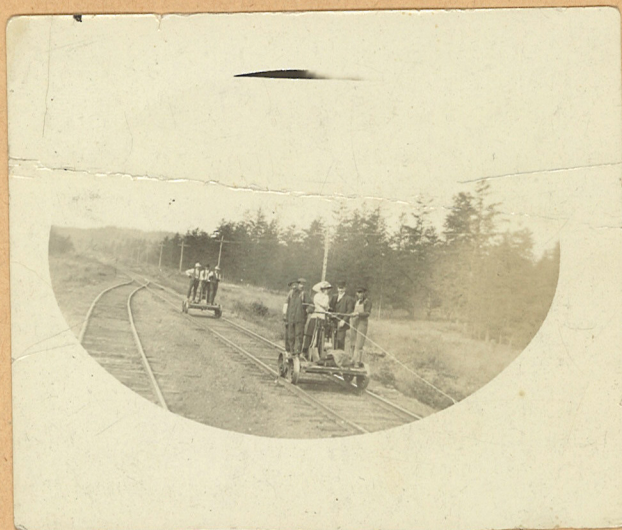
To Emma Scott. Praff.

At 8 o'clock of a grey morning.

The beauty of the soul is mirrored on her face -
The sweetness of the soul shines in her tender eyes -
The courage of the soul, the steadfastness, the grace,
The life, the glow divine, the spark that never dies -
These stamp a wondrous worth all time cannot
efface.

Upon God's finished work, the soul's fair
Dwelling place x

Grace Brewster.





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